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Dr. Hough is dead

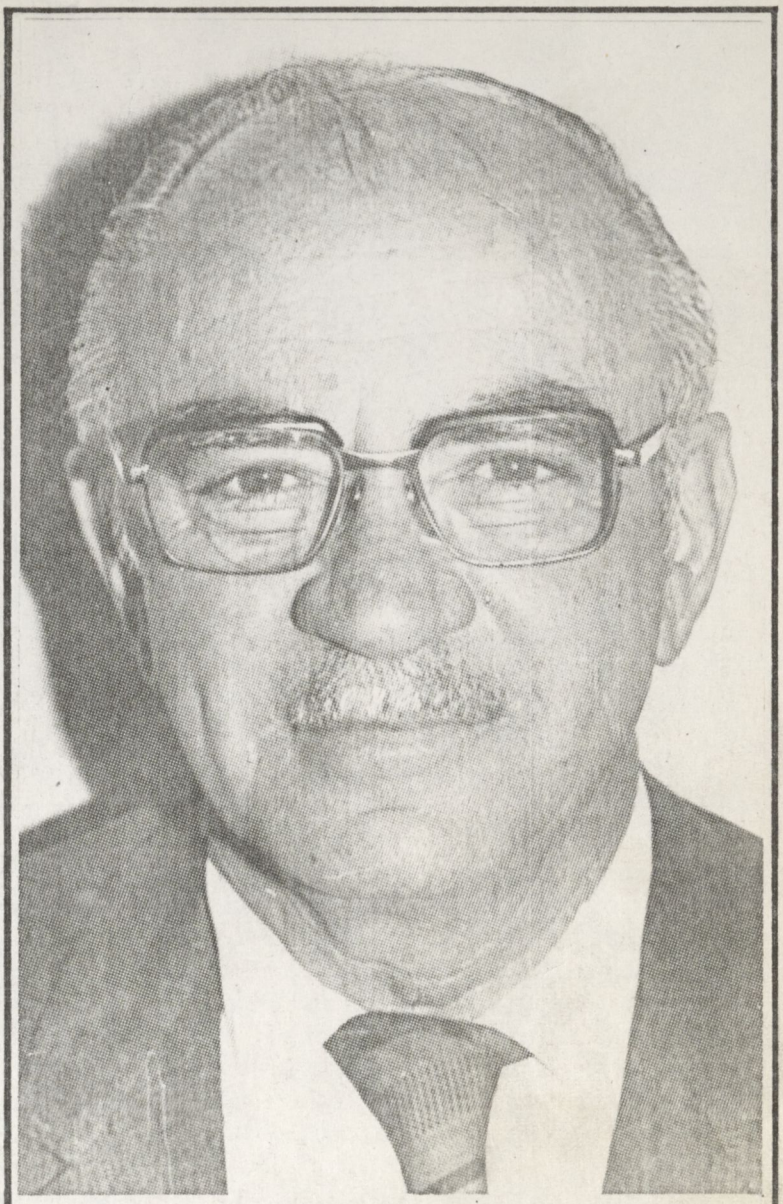
A STROKE IS FATAL TO THE MAN WHO FOR 30 YEARS DIRECTED INYO HEALTH SERVICES

HE MAY HAVE BEEN SOME KIND OF WORK ADdict, or, as many claim, he was "dedicated" and service-oriented; one of the old-line family physician types who somewhere along the way forgot how to say no. He was everybody's - anybody's - doctor, even though he spent the past 30 years working mostly within the structured framework of the county's public health department that he himself organized in the 1940's and 50's.

Victor Hough, M.D., came to Inyo in answer to an advertisement. It was 1949 and Dorothy Cragen was the county's school superintendent. This week, notified of the doctor's sudden death, she tried to remember how it all came about. "We were looking for someone to take of the children," she recalled, "someone we could depend on." And take care of them he did - for thirty years. "We were happy to have him. He was good with the children," she said.

The beginning of the end came last

(See DR. HOUGH on Page 2)



VICTOR HOUGH, M.D.

EARTHQUAKE!

ACTION PICTURES ON PAGE 10

FORUM: Letters, PAGE 4

ELECTRIC RATES: HIGHER FOR MOST, LOWER FOR A FEW. See NEWS BRIEFS.



At 73, Irén Marik begins her sixty-first concert season

She practices for the evening's program

A picture story on Page 12

THE
Inyo County News-Letter

Oct. 6 1978

60¢

Compiled by John Heston, Benett Kessler

A NEWS ALTERNATIVE ♦ EASTERN SIERRA NEWS SERVICE

The COUNTY

News Briefs

HIGHER RATES FOR POWER AND FOR TV; LONE PINE COOLS IT AS LAW ENFORCEMENT ISSUES GIVE WAY TO POTLUCK DINNERS; COUNTY'S QUANDARY IN HIRING A HEALTH DOCTOR

RESPONDING TO WHAT AMOUNTED TO A PUBLIC relations problem in the southern part of the county, Sheriff Floyd Barton last week announced his appointment of a deputy as his official liaison to the Lone Pine community. Sergeant Donald Dorsey got his introduction to a number of concerned people there this week when they turned out for another of their now-established town meetings and "community awareness programs." The sheriff's PR problems came to a head some weeks ago when some Lone Pine parents said two officers roughed-over a bunch of kids at a local residence. Shortly after the incident, which is still under investigation, some 300 residents turned out for a hurriedly-called town meeting at which a number voiced their complaints with county law enforcement. Although the first town meeting was dominated by angry outcries, a calmer mood prevailed

(See NEWS BRIEFS on Page 3)



>><<

Jim Hough, one of the doctor's two sons, holds "Pepper," Dr. Hough's pet, rescued as a pup from the county pound. Each day she watched from a window, or from a front doorway, awaiting his return home. With an anxiety that won't be calmed, she continues her lonely vigil.

>><<

DR. HOUGH, Continued

week at Lake Tahoe. The doctor was there at the home of friends and he complained of feeling "dizzy." His own diagnostic expertise told him something was amiss and he went, or was taken, to the hospital at Tahoe. It was a stroke as he probably suspected, and he was left with a partial paralysis. He was later taken to the hospital at Bishop and remained in coma until he died. He would have been 62 next month.

While he was still conscious at Tahoe, his words there gave some insights into his personal priorities. Ms. Hough said on the day of the funeral that he talked about the office, matters that needed to be taken care of. And another insight came to light in the "Pepper" incident: Would he like to see "Pepper," his very personal pet pup? He told his wife no, not to bring the dog, she wouldn't "understand" his being sick, and he "didn't want to hurt her."

Ms. Hough - Ellen - said the doctor came from Chicago, she from a nearby suburb. They met at Northwestern University where she was on the dental staff and he was a medical student... She met him "when he was sitting in a dental chair to get a tooth checked." They were married 32 years.

He had been a research chemist, gained a fellowship to study at Northwestern where he later earned a master's degree in physiology and proceeded from there to medicine. After graduation, he served in the army. He was in Korea for a year. Most of his career, beginning with the service, has been as an "organization" doctor, although he maintained an office privately. Friends - anybody - who needed his services received them at any hour of the day. His healing sympathies extended beyond people; he rescued his pet dog from the pound, a fact which to those who knew him was little surprise.

His was a working religion, a kind of applied metaphysics in human service; it is a paradox that the structured, organizational attitudes applied to his work did not extend to religion; his friends say he "lived" a kind of personal religion, practicing more than ritualizing the best "religious" ethic. "No matter who called, if they needed help, he would give it."

That first call for "help" was from the county, back in '49. From "looking after the county's school children," he moved toward the building of a county health department, Inyo's first. And in that lay no small accomplishment. "He was a jewel," said the county administrator, John K. Smith, this week. "Our chance of getting another Dr. Hough are one in a million. His death is a terrible loss to the county." The tribute was spoken in terms of real concern, and in tones bespeaking more than the usual "official" statements of the political world. In fact, the record of accomplishment tends to show that Inyo will be hard put to replace the doctor.

For 10 years after his arrival here, he lived with his growing family at Lone Pine. His office then was in his home. As the department grew, so did Dr. Hough, in terms of expanded friendships and loyalties. As for the department, Smith said "He was not one to make waves. He just stayed right on top of the public health functions. He was knowledgeable enough to put together a good program with little expense....He arranged for federal grants for families and children."

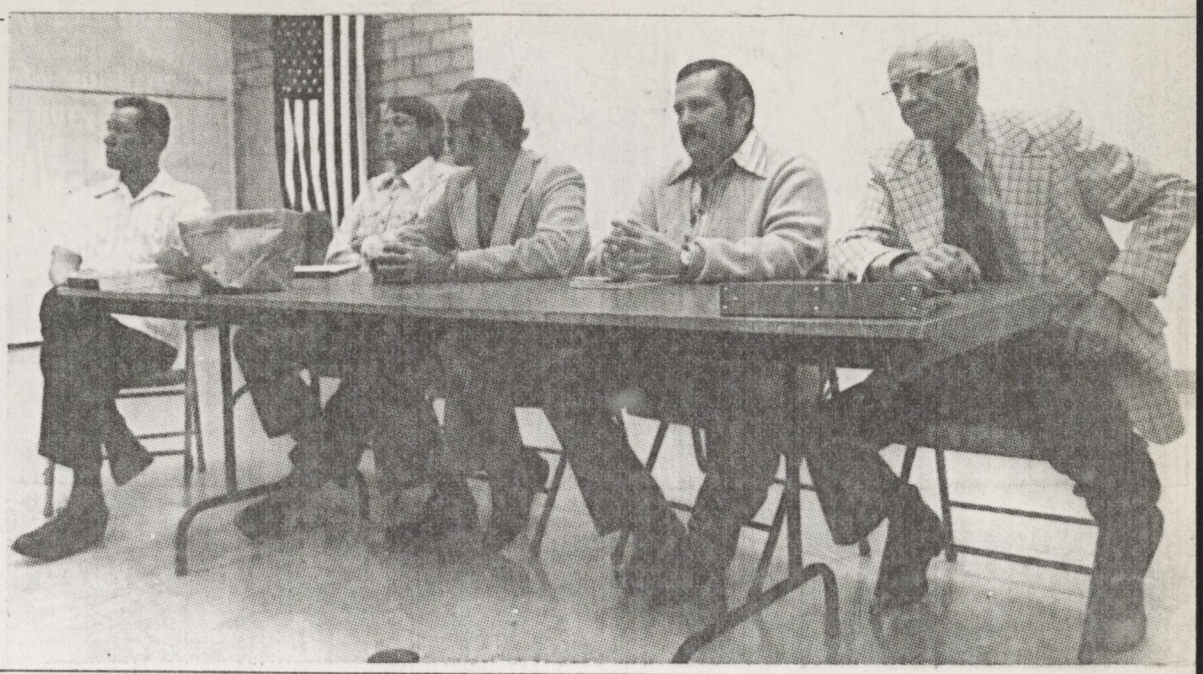
One son, Victor, follows in his father's footsteps. He practices at Bishop. Another son, Jim, studies biology at UC Davis and plans to enter dental school.

Away from work (It tended to follow him), Dr. Hough found some relaxation in fishing, apparently his second love to medicine; and in his home, its grounds and its duckpond. He actually filled two jobs: county health physician and county health administrator. His sympathies also extended to the elderly. As a county co-worker said: "There is only a small percentage who have feelings for the old folks. He worked all the time."

The funeral was on Monday and already Inyo was feeling its loss of a valued public - and very personal - servant.

At the county's health offices which he had so energetically established over the years, there was a quiet - and a watchful, concerned waiting.

The county must now fill the vacancy created by Dr. Hough's death. See NEWS BRIEFS on the current status.



Law enforcement and county officials, answering questions posed by a number of concerned Lone Pine residents attending a "town meeting," helped to cool tempers. In the panel: Sgt. Harvey Ferguson, CHP; Supervisor Richard McDonald; DA "Buck" Gibbons; the sheriff's "liaison," Sgt. Donald Dorsey; and Sheriff Floyd Barton.

NEWS BRIEFS, Continued

this week as Chairman Robert Frickel called the folks together at Lone Pine's Town Hall. As promised, Barton showed up, along with a number of other county and law enforcement officials including Sgt. Harvey Ferguson of the Highway Patrol (Also among Lone Pine complaints is one about speeding traffic through town). News Service Reporter Frank Burns who was present at the meeting, said there remains some "bitter feelings down here" about the two allegedly offending officers involved in the recent incident, but that the tone of the week's session was "very different." The officials answered questions about problems in the town and ended on a congenial note: So popular have the get-togethers become in only two sessions, Chairman Frickel suggested they all meet every month. "And how would you like to turn it into a potluck dinner affair?," he asked. Motion carried among much applause. And how about Dorsey, the liaison man? Looks like he'll be dining with the town hall people once each month.

***

THE LYRICS WERE CHANGED A LITTLE but for Inyo people concerned about DWP's new "rate restructuring," it was the same old tune routinely played: a "public hearing" for the record before DWP proceeded to do whatever it wants too. But in fact there were few outcries about the new rate schedule. In the first place, the Mountain had come to Mohammed this time, so to speak, in that DWP's top boss, Louis Winnard, appeared as some kind of concession to Inyo's concerns. Looking dour and a little bored, Winnard orchestrated the pronouncements of his fellow-traveling LA brass: City Attorney Ed Schlotman; a rate specialist with a Phd., Ms. Hethie Parmesano; DWP Commissioner Ricardo Gutierrez, and Commission Secretary Judy Davidson. Out in the sparse audience was Duane Georgeson, the DWP knight that often jousts with Inyo officials over water disputes. Winnard told his less-than-a-dozen hearers that DWP needs revenues to support the power company's coal project in Arizona; hence, the rate increase. If granted (a certainty, since there is no agency to dispute anything DWP wants), the increase will finance coal development to offset the use of oil to generate electricity. Winnard promised no more rate increases for two years. Under the current proposal, about 40% of Inyo power users will have no increases at all; senior citizens may enjoy some discounts, and the "big users" will be hardest hit. For once, Inyo's "official" position, as voiced by Deputy DA Greg James, is on the side of DWP. "We're not opposed to the restructuring in any way," he told the DWP brass. But James did point out another problem, a "small one," he said. He referred to DWP's failure to provide any environmental impact report before ramming through the rate increase, and he doubts the city's claim to immunity in that issue.



DWP's top brass Louis Winnard
For an increase, the mountain came to Mohammed

***

AND OTHER RATE INCREASES MAY BE IN STORE for a number of county residents: Independence televiewers who now pay $8 for their cable service will soon be paying $10. That hike was announced this week as Bishop's Ted Higle "officially" took over the operation of the cable system that he recently bought from its original builder, Red Austin, for an undisclosed amount. But the Independence viewers will be getting more for their money; Higle plans to improve service by reworking a complex line of amplifiers - and he also plans to provide another channel (5) to give some viewers an alternative to the evening's news broadcasts. "As it stands, now," he said, "a lot of people don't care for the news that is on every channel in the evenings. Five will give them something else to watch, a movie or sports." Higle said he plans to add still another channel later on: 8 out of Reno. Meanwhile, other deals have been concluded among Inyo communications people: Community Cablevision, which serves areas of Big Pine and outlying Bishop areas, was bought by Roy

(See NEWS BRIEFS on Page 14)

YOUR VIEW

FORUM

LETTERS AND COMMENT

The News-Letter welcomes letters and comment relevant to current public issues. The editors will publish here those considered timely and stating concise viewpoints. Letters and statements should be addressed to PO Box 531, Independence 93526. The editors remind News-Letter's readers that publication of a letter does not necessarily imply either agreement with its content or a guarantee of its accuracy; it is FORUM's goal merely to provide open discussion.

COMMENTS (TO PRACTICALLY EVERYONE) ABOUT THE FEDERAL "RARE II" PLAN

Dear Sir: (Copies to media, various agencies)

This letter is in reference to your plan titled "Rare II." The Forest Service has repeatedly stated via the news media that they invite and would appreciate comments. Since I am taking the time to do so, I trust you will take the time to read my comments. I travel extensively over the Western United States and have been doing so for the past decade. I am referring to approximately 100,000 miles per year in travel. Since I first began seeing statements in the newspapers concerning Rare II, I have spent several weeks in obtaining information about the plan and public opinion of same. I have been to the supervisors in three counties in the State of California; to two different Chambers of Commerce; to three Rangers stations; to two BLM offices. I have spoken to business people, both owners and employees of grocery stores, hardware stores, sporting goods stores, gas stations and garages, motels, restaurants and other small businesses. It is extremely easy to get the personal opinions of these people on the subject of Rare II, or, as so many people now call it, Rape I. You merely walk up to any stranger and mention the subject and that same stranger will speak for a period of several minutes to two hours. I have personally received the opinions of several hundred people and I do flatly state that I have only talked with one person who was for Rare II and, in all honesty, his opinion was not very strong. He is an assistant ranger in the Forest Service, or at least that is what I believe his classification was.

The basic feeling of your grass roots public is: "It's time to return to the law of the six-gun and the hangman's noose." That said law to be applied to approximately two-thirds of our elected but self-serving politicians. Personally, I think if we apply this law to only 50% the other half would get the idea and straighten up, at least for a little while. If you and the U.S. Congress (One of the addressees of the letter is President Carter) have managed to modify the laws of the United States and our Constitution so that you can legally ram through Rape I despite contrary public opinion and demand, it is not only illegal and immoral, I consider it an act of treason.

- James D. Wilder
Paradise, Cal.

(Editors' note: FORUM Contributor Wilder makes reference to the current "Roadless Area Review and Evaluation" of the Department of Agriculture, which, translated into english from the Bureaucratese, means roughly another federal program (a very costly one so far) that places more public lands under the regulation of the federal bureaucracy. In effect it is not unlike current programs of the Bureau of Land Management and amounts to the Forest Service share of regulatory power. RARE II will in effect deny access to public lands for a large segment of the public and it is largely the product of desk-bound Forest Service personnel physically unequipped for fighting fires or planting trees, and psychologically unequipped for intelligent thinking processes.)

***

STILL MORE ABOUT THE FEDERALS IN THIS VIEW FROM LITTLE LAKE

To the Editor:

If the Community of Darwin goes the federal fund route for their water system and the bureaucrats run true to form, i.e., urban renewal, etc., the people will be puppets on a string - required to clear out and bulldoze that which does not meet their standards, etc.

I can share documentation on this for those who are interested. (The community of) Dunmovin has identical problems with a far worse storage tank but I'll fight federal funds even though I cannot get hot water in my home and 70% of the year no water at all, long periods without a bath or go to a motel or homes of friends to bathe.

- - -

Correspondence which has been received reminds me of a story which I heard during the 1950's. It could apply to any town, any law enforcement officer.

A stranger came to town and looked the town over with the idea of settling there. He asked a resident what kind of town is this, a good town or otherwise. The resident responded by asking the stranger what kind of town was it that you left? The stranger reviled the town he had left.

The resident answered with the statement that that is how he would find this town.

- Pat McClendon
Little Lake

***

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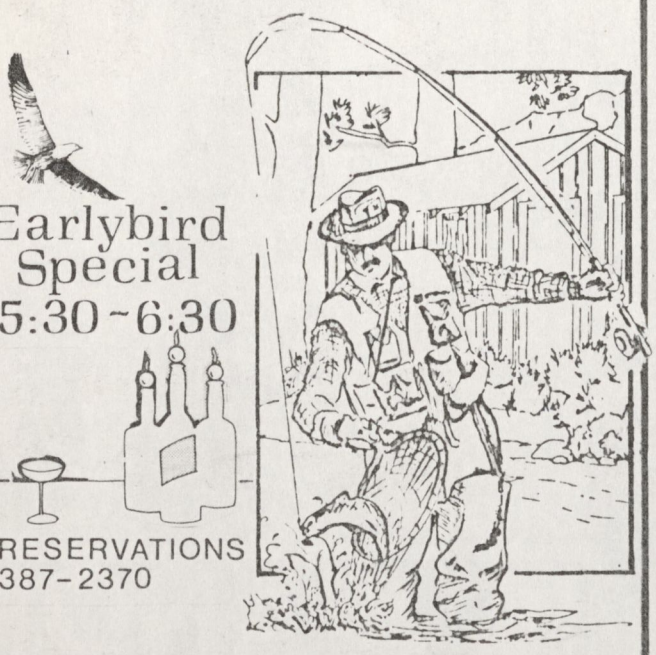
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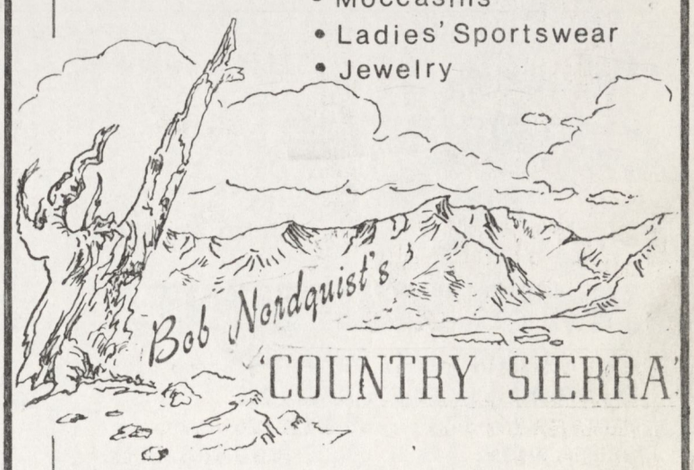
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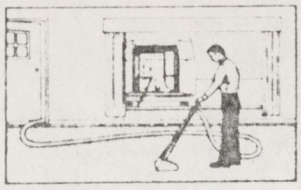
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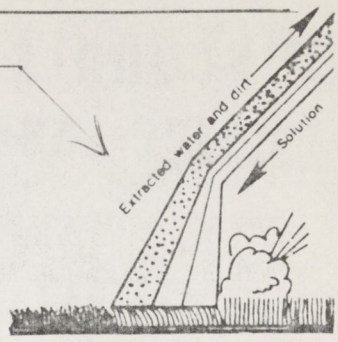


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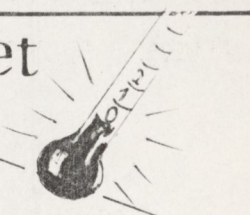
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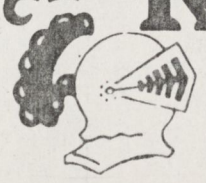
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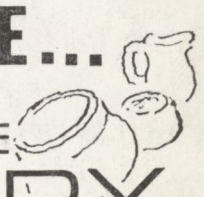
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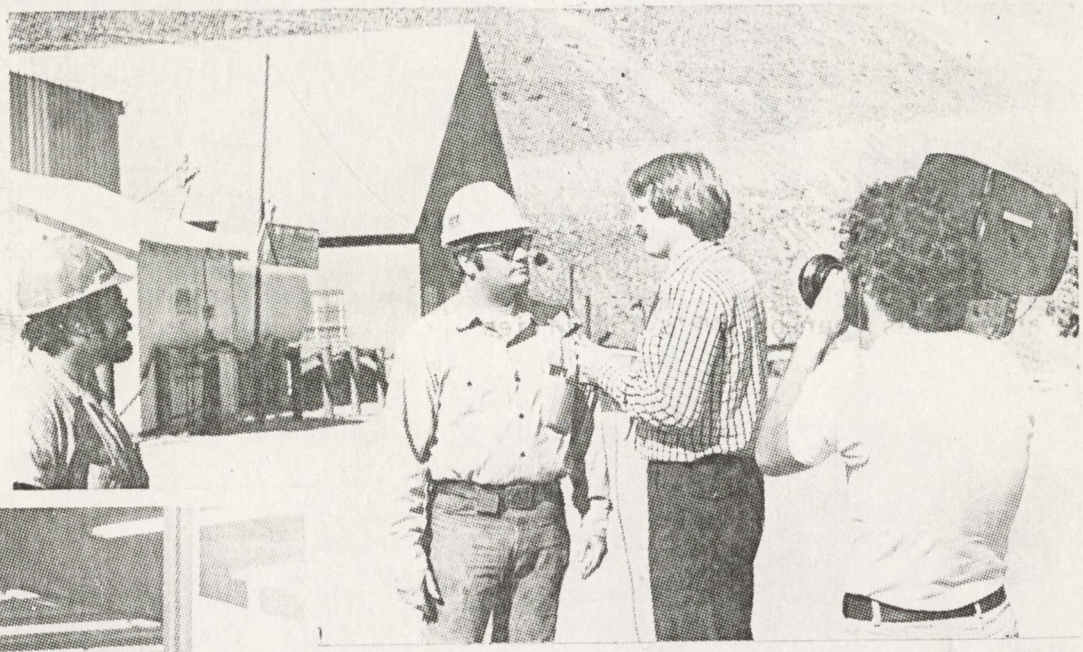


A 5.7 jolt and its rumbling aftershocks remind Inyoans that they are not immune

The earth shook and Reporter Les Hall sped northward. He was there when aftershocks caused these avalanches near Pine Creek

TV crews flew in...

The quake also jarred the assignments editors at the Los angeles and San Francisco television outlets. Crews hurried in to interview Union Carbide mineworkers who were close to the epicenter.

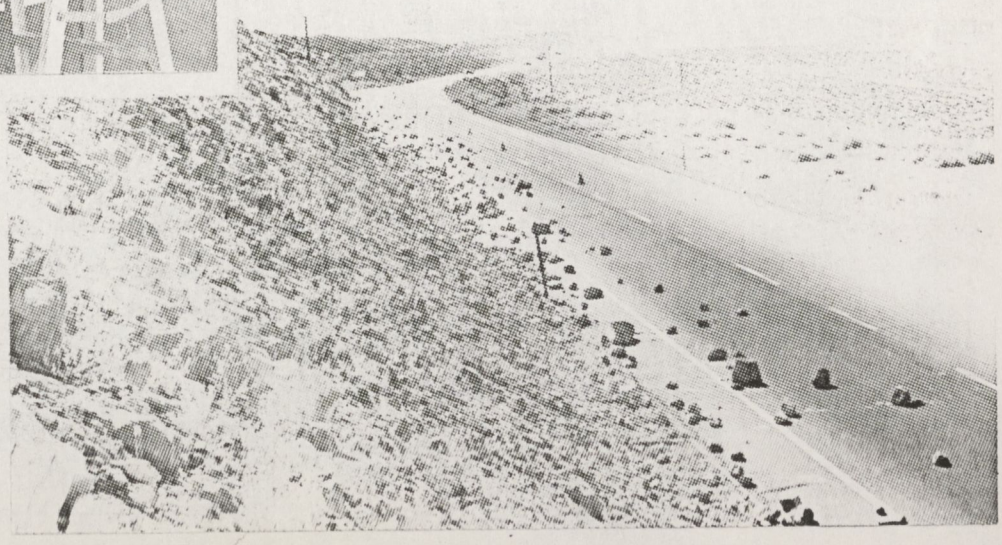




News-Letter Photos by Les Hall

News in pictures FOTOPAGE

Bishop was lucky. Had the quake been closer to town, it could have caused untold damage: a few glass panes were shattered, like this one at the north end Safeway store.



At least 25 aftershocks followed the first jolt and rocks rolled down steep hillsides and cuts to litter highways north of Bishop. The initial shockwave was felt over literally thousands of square miles, and calls poured in to the seismographic measuring station at Pasadena.



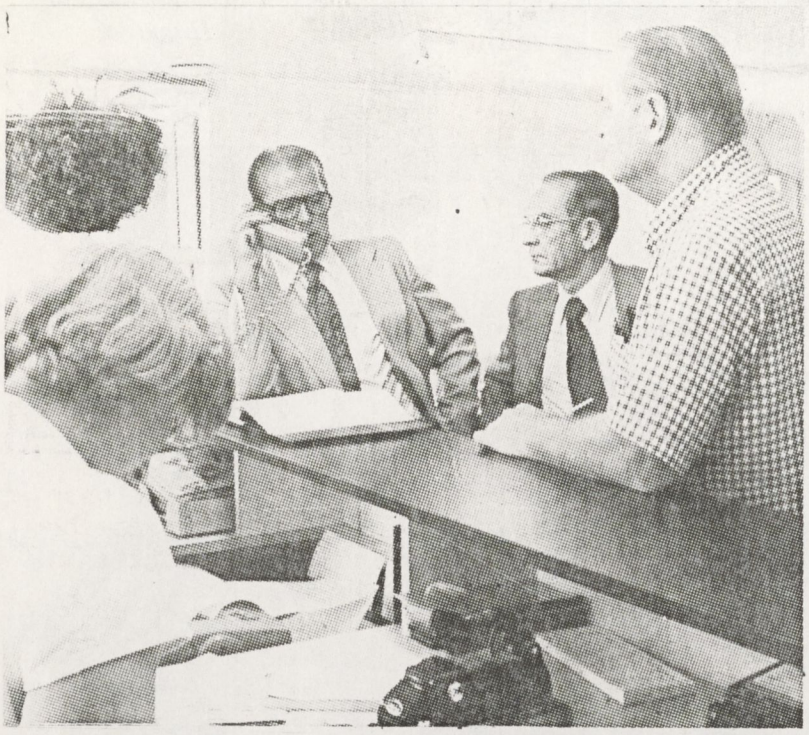
Avalanches and a real concern about LA's dams, its waterways and power plants

As whole cliffs crashed into the canyons, two top DWP engineers flew into Bishop for an anxious tour of DWP's facilities



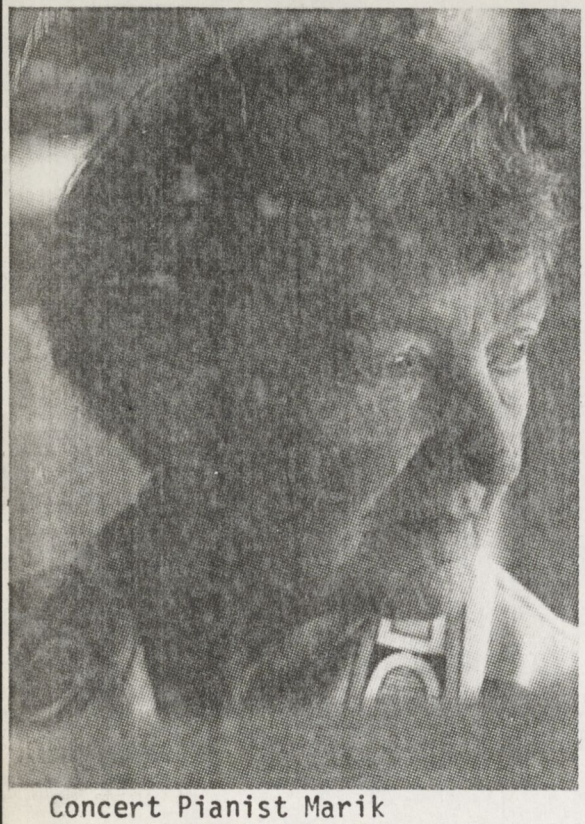
Some roadways were temporarily blocked

Like a nervous mother bird fearful that her nest had been disturbed, a DWP helicopter hurried to Bishop. Aboard were a crew of officials who would assess from the air any earthquake damage to DWP's facilities



Alighting only long enough to refuel and to make hurried calls from the Bishop airport office were two DWP engineers concerned about damage to DWP's plants. Allen Fricke and Luis Escalante were soon on their way again.





Concert Pianist Marik
Working "retirement" in Inyo

Irén Marik: Working artist begins another busy season

At 12, she presented her first concert in Budapest. She has performed continuously since then and now, at 73, her music is warm and rich as ever, its vitality having increased with the years.

Iren Marik presents serious concerts in what may be the world's smallest professional auditorium - the home she shares with Novelist Evelyn Eaton at Independence.



Photos: John Heston



She practices on her concert grand piano five or six hours every day, plays with the "family" poodle, and enjoys a rose garden that flourishes outside her door. On concert days, friends come over to set up as best they can the seating for an overflow crowd.





Faithful always to her art, she practices every day at her concert grand piano. "The longer I play, the more I know. But time is short now," she says. She would like to pass on her knowledge to a student and she does find time to teach a few individuals. She holds concerts (Chopin is a local favorite) on "the first Tuesday of every other month."

Notes from B.K.


BENETT KESSLER

A FRIEND OF OURS, A MAGAZINE WRITER-PHOTOGRAPHER from New York, is in town to do a piece on the water situation in the Southwestern United States. He is a fellow of some wit and talent (His photos have provided the cover art for a number of books and magazines), and he is observant. He was watching the quick, sudden-death expertise of some of Inyo's preying mantises which deftly flick out an arm or leg to catch other insects on the wing. "And so what we need," says our friend, "is some adolescent hormone to give one of these mantises, and then he'd grow *this big*. What a goalie he'd make on the hockey team!" And, well, so goes the thinking of the New York types. Actually, he's a native Tennesseean with a drawl *this big*. You'll find his by-line an easy one to remember: Jim Smith.

***

SO, HOORAY!, this was the week of the 20th anniversary of citizens band radio! Face it; all God's chillun got CB's! A great idea it was and it remains. But CB is undoubtedly the prime medium for the greatest amount of useless verbiage and idle chit-chat that ever darkened an airwave of any frequency. "Monitoring" a CB radio is a little less dull and predictably monotonous than, say, watching the Saturday kiddie shows or the afternoon soaps. "CB" came into its own with the truckers and with the song and movie *Convoy*. CB's became so popular that there was at one time a glut on the market and manufacturers, overoptimistic about the sales potential, had warehouses full of the old 23-channel sets. But the Pace people say things are picking up again and the future looks rosey for maybe another 20 years. Used for necessary communication, they're great; handy in emergencies; and for truckers, I guess, better than No-Doz for keeping awake in the early hours. Some oft-heard "handles" in this area: Silver Star; Music Man; Mother Nature; Sierra Wave; Peanut Butter; Copperhead; Pony Tail; Caboose; Weather Map Lady; Reservation Flash (or Whiz, or Fuzz, or Streak; I forget); and Earth-mover; and Big Grouchy Bear; and how many can remember Lucky Mancini's handle? (He hasn't been on the two-way much recently). Happy twentieth, all you talkative characters! And, by way of mention, many thanks for your occasional help in getting the news out. It may be a Tower of Babel, but it has its moments. *Ten-fer, y'all?*

***

FROM WHAT WE HEAR, THEY BOUGHT IT AT NO BARGAIN PRICE, those new owners of Lone Pine's Radio station, KINC. Reports have it that they laid out eighty grand, no less (unverified by a present management not eager to talk to the other media). And the new ownership may be in some ways drearily reminiscent of the past: down-south ownership with one partner living in L.A., the other to be working here. But who knows? Practically any change in programming will be an improvement. And, no, that's not sour grapes; ask anybody what they think. KINC is a terrific little potential for a real community service radio that Might-Have-Been-but-never-was.

***

RUSS ADAMS RETURNED FROM A EUROPEAN JAUNT to report on the sad state of the dollar. He discovered while there the two-dollar cup of coffee and the hundred-dollar hotel room. And was it worth it? You bet, assures the local photography man.

***

IF ORGANIZED LABOR WERE AS EAGER TO PRODUCE AS THEY ARE TO WATCH THE CLOCK, the dollar dip might improve. The president of the UAW told newsmen this past week that he thinks the four-day workweek (or playweek, as you prefer) is "inevitable. Even if the days are longer than eight hours, the union types will be asking more, and so it goes. Now if I can just get my own work-week down to a manageable seven days, I might make it another month or two....

***

VERY PLEASANT PEOPLE DEPT: (Earthquake Division): Jim Hill and Larry Scott, who were helpful to the film crews and media types that went careening up Pine Creek Road looking for (and perhaps lusting for) disasters. Also Tom Wood, manager of the Tom's Place Garage who reported damages: one picture frame that shook off the wall.

***

WE SUSPECTED IT, BUT KIND OF REGRETTED HAVING IT CONFIRMED: The television programs most squawked-about when the cable's on the fritz: sports shows. Ted Higle, the cable entrepreneur, confirmed it this week. That's one reason he'll be adding Channel 5 to the Independence system he just bought from Red Austin. Lakers vs. Angels, or somesuch, *ad infinitum, ad nauseam.*

***

DEPUTY D.A. GREG JAMES WAS HARBORING A FUGITIVE BAT THIS WEEK. The fluttery mammal soared first through the justice courtroom then disappeared, later to be found in an air vent in the DA's office. James found him there and wisely closed the vent to await the arrival of the rabies control man. Too late, the bat, suspected of being rabid, had fled, and remains at large. Health people warn that bats flying in daylight hours are sick; watch it.

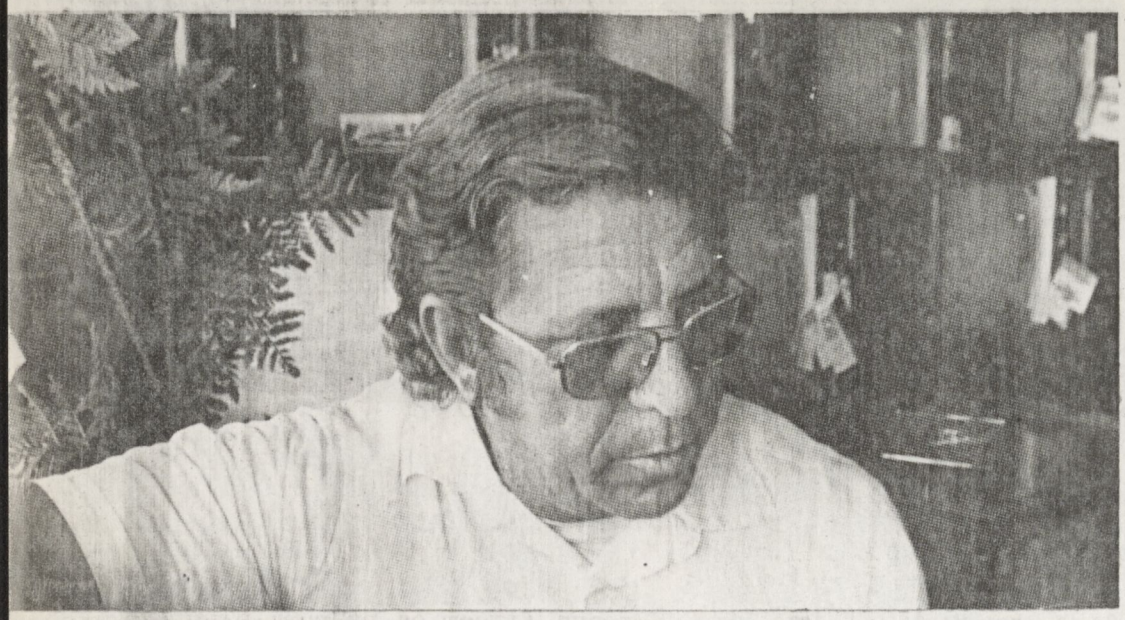
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May all your bats be safely belfried in the daytime, and may the news in your day be good news every day...

Sincerely,

BK

POSTSCRIPT: That editor of ours admits that we were "late" last week, but not this week: He has "changed the day of publication." Cop-out if you ask me!



Cable TV Entrepreneur Ted Higle among TVs.
Higher costs for Independence viewers, but better service too.

NEWS BRIEFS, Continued

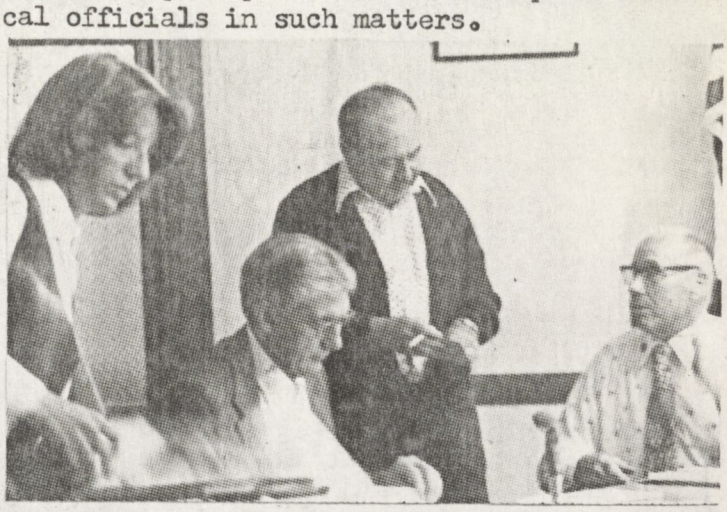
Mayhugh, the former owner of Bishop's KIOQ-FM radio outlet. He took over officially on Oct. 1, promising improvements to the system when he returns from a vacation trip to the South Pacific

***

THE DEATH OF THE COUNTY'S HEALTH DOCTOR (See Page 1) has left the county administration with a vacancy not easy to fill. Meeting this week, the supervisors informally agreed that it may take two people to fill the jobs that Dr. Victor Hough had performed for the past 30 years. Hough had been both physician and administrator. County Administrator John K. Smith said the county has "several alternatives" - among them: contracting with the state government (an idea Hough had opposed earlier), and separation of parts of the department into two departments. The supervisors are far from optimistic about "finding another man like Dr. Hough." Smith said he will be reporting to the board after he studies the health department situation; meanwhile, the board okayed County Psychiatrist Leo Pisculi as Inyo's interim health officer.

***

LOCAL FOREST SERVICE OFFICIALS ARE GETTING the heat that most Inyo residents and officials would prefer to turn on Washington. This week, some of the locals appeared before the supervisors to get (predictably bad) comments about the Forest Service's "RARE II" program, an evaluation and organization plan that is suspected locally of being another federal grab for further regulation and control of public lands in Inyo. Arisim was told in no uncertain terms that Inyo officialdom believes the entire program to be unnecessary and that local residents want no more loss of control to the federal government's increasingly land-hungry bureaus. But the supervisors did go for another Forest Service proposal that presents an alternative to much of "RARE II." "Alternative B" would allow Inyo's roadless areas to be turned into "multiple use" areas rather than "wilderness" areas, which means the lands involved would remain much as they are now. But County Administrator Smith argued whether RARE II is necessary at all for Inyo if "Plan B" keeps things to a status quo. "I can't see taking action," he said, "just to be taking action." But other officials, wary of federal power, said that "no action" would leave the land open for some possible future "wilderness" designation. So they voted to favor "B", as the planning department had done in the previous week. Supervisor Chairman Richard McDonald voiced the county's real concern: "I don't think our opinion is worth a hill of beans to the Forest Service." Indeed, recent federal actions and "public hearings" have indicated that Uncle Sugar may in fact be deaf to the "input" provided from the public and local officials in such matters.



County officials recess for executive session
Pondering county Health and bureau problems

Photos: John Heston

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